

Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat *Incorporated.*

JUNE 1991

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting	June 7	Mr Rob. Humphries - The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act
Meeting	July 5	Mrs V. Dedman - The Galapagos Islands
Excursion	June 9	Werribee Gorge A. Barlow
Excursion	July 7	Union Jack Reserve F. Harrap (Half-day excursion)



President: Mr K Hammond Ph.053 394534
 Vice Pres: Mr K McDonnell 326800
 Secretary: Mr J Gregurke 394993
 Treasurer: Mrs F Williamson 327631
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Meetings as specified are held at the School
 of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth,
 Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m.
 EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE
 FROM CROCKERS, cor. STURT AND ARM-
 STRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for
 FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for
 HALF DAY*

THE LIBRARY.

At our last meeting a sub-committee was formed to review and revitalize the club library. Further, a sum of money was voted to start a purchasing programme.

The sub-committee will develop a purchasing policy and will welcome suggestions, from members, of subjects that could be covered e.g. moths and butterflies, floras, ecological topics etc., and recommendations of specific book titles.

Donations to the purchasing fund and **gifts** of appropriate books will be most welcome.

The sub- committee comprises Sue Gregurke, Ian Castle and Ken McDonnell.

Quiz Time

1. Amphibians are found all over the World, the largest group is the frogs and toads. AMPHI a Greek word meaning both and BIOS life is the General What does this mean?
- 2 Are turtles and tortoises amphibians?
- 3 What Aust. bird has the most unusual and outstanding feathers?
- 4 The Tasmanian Devil is SARCEPHILUS harrissii what does SARCEPHILUS mean?
- 5 What is a Pratincole?
- 66 How many members of the Crane family is in Aust?
- 7 What is thought to be the last bird to come naturally to Australia?
- 8 Why are some plants carnivorous?



Field Reports: May Meeting

Several members reported sightings of up to 6 freckled duck at Lake Wendouree over the past 3 weeks.

Ken McDonnell - Possible sighting of platypus at Lake Wendouree.

Greg Binns - Drying up of wetlands has caused many birds to congregate at Winter Swamp: 38 Yellow Spoonbill, 4 Royal Spoonbill, 8 Red-kneed Dotterel, 7 Black-fronted Dotterel, 1 Red-necked Avocet, White-faced Heron and 5 species of duck.

- Little Eagle found with freshly killed Magpie at Mt Beckwith.

Helen Burgess - Red-capped Robin at Ballan. Black-shouldered Kite at Ballarat North.

Lyndsay Fink - Australian Hobby near Meredith. Many foxes shot around Brisbane Ranges.

Frank Harrap - Gang-gang Cockatoos have left Mt Helen after staying 10 weeks.

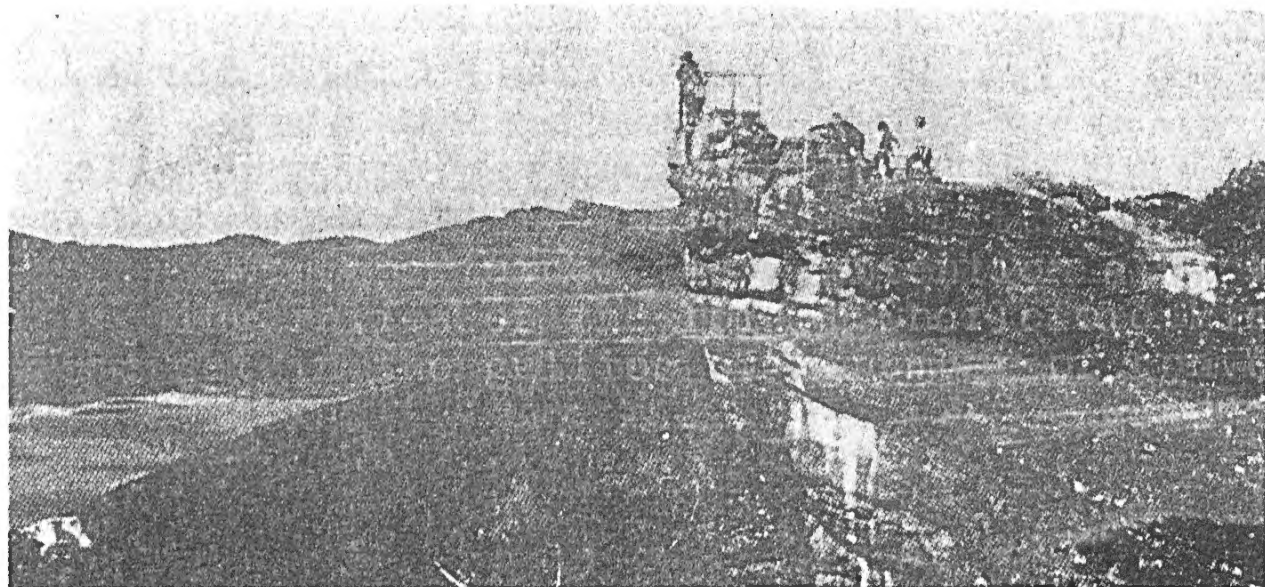
John Gregurke - Pair of Brolgas at Rocklands Reservoir.

Pat Murphy - *Pratia platycalyx* (Salt Pratia) at Lake Wendouree.

Diary Dates

Thursday 27th June: Committee meeting at McDonnell's, Dawes Rd, Invermay. 8pm.

October 4th-6th: WVFNCA Campout at Cape Bridgewater, hosted by Portland Club.



Wayne is a member of the Society for Growing Australian Plants, his first love is Correas, the name comes from a Portuguese Naturalist, they belong to the RUTACEAE and include Boronia, Wax-flowers and others. Sometimes called Native Fuchsia they range in height from ground covers to 5 metres, they will all grow in the Ballarat region and their bright flowers in winter make them a popular plant in gardens.

They have seed pods in four parts but are hard to germinate, they are, however, readily grown from cuttings. Except in the White Correa the rest have the corolla united for more than three quarters of its length, the leaves are generally hairy.

1 Correa aemula (hairy correa) to 1.5m a shade and moisture lover, flowers usually green to white inside purplish to pink very hairy leaves, The one at fern tree falls is believed to be crossed with reflexa.

2 Correa alba (white) found in coastal regions has white star shaped flowers, greyish green leaves, there is a pink form that tends to grow smaller than the white form named C. alba var. pinosa.

3 Correa backhousiana (backhouses C.) A hardy plant basically from Tasmania, has lemon flowers, there is a cinnamon flowered form.

4 Correa baurlenii (chef's cap correa) Has bright green leaves and grows to 1.5 m, is easily recognised by its long tubular greenish white flowers with a green flat topped calyx resembling a chef's hat in shape.

5 Correa calycina (green correa) A tall shrub with ovate or oblong leaves, smooth above, hairy below with whitish green bells in calyces with four pointed green lobes, stamens longer than bell.

6 Correa decumbens (spreading) A good ground cover with red and green flowers standing upright there is an upright form also.

7 *Correa glabra* (smooth) A tall bushy shrub flowers yellowish white to green stamens longer not found in Tasmania. One at Mt Wycheproof white and there is a pink form at Mt Beckwith, yellow in Werribee Gorge.

8 *Correa lawrenciana* (mountain correa) A tall shrub to small tree to 5m leaves 10 cm long, has very straight green to pink bells sometimes crimson bells in slightly lobed brown calyx are narrow and decidedly shorter than the stamens, it is wind prone.

9 *Correa pulchella* (salmon correa) This is the most beautiful of all the correas, a small growing shrub very hardy, colour variations are red and pink also a cinnamon and white form (Williamsons of Pomonal sell them).

10 *Correa reflexa* (common correa) found in all states except W.A. And N.T. variations from bright red to greenish yellow, most of these colours are in the Brisbane Ranges, the one at Enfield is said to be the best.

11 *Correa schlechtendalii* (narrow correa) This is an inland form with small shining leaves, greyish green with green tipped red bells narrow at the base and longer stamens.

There are a number of hybrids and crosses some are - Dusky bells, Mannii probably the best, rubra or squat bells, marrion's marvel, poorinda fancy, clearview david? and others

Wayne was thanked for his talk and excellent slides in the usual way.

L.F.

Answers to Quiz.

1. As Tadpoles they are water creatures with gills, but developing lungs and breathing air as adults.
2. No they are reptiles. 3 The Lyrebird.
4. It is a Greek word meaning Flesh Eating.
5. A bird. 6. Two, Brolgas and Sarus Cranes.
7. Cattle Egrets. 8. As they usually grow in wet and boggy land they lack some nutrients mainly Nitrogen.

May Excursion.

In setting out for the Eganstown - Basalt area the excursion party first visited Lake Wendouree to check on the continued presence of the small flock of Freckled Ducks which have been resident on the lake since April 14th.

The birds were located resting on water plants near lake lodge at the western end of the lake, and members who had not previously sighted the rare visitors (this has been the first recorded visit of the species to Ballarat) were able to make some good observations. Six birds have been noted in varying small groups during their time on the lake.

In ideal autumn weather the party proceeded via Creswick to Deep Creek, Eganstown, and paused for refreshments at the Deep Spring reserve. A dam at Newlyn provided good viewing of eight species of water birds, including three duck species; a typical example of the large numbers of waterfowl frequenting permanent wetlands in the district during the abnormally dry season. At Deep Spring colourful permanent bird residents included Yellow Tufted Honeyeater, Superb Fairy Wren, Yellow Robin, Striated Thornbill, White Browed Scrub Wren, and Crimson Rosella - accompanied by a Koala low in a Eucalypt.

The next area for exploration was the Charleford Mine and Dam near Basalt. Here again the permanent bird residents, with White-eared Honeyeater and Scarlet Robin did not provide exciting bird watching but the examination of the understorey provided interesting studies. These included a range of wattles not usually found in the forests close to Ballarat viz Mitghell's Wattle, Rough Wattle, Woolly Wattle.

Members turned their attention also to the mining relics of the former Charleford Mine complex, set in the gullies of a number of converging Creeks.

These proved most interesting, with ruins or trestled ramps, walling of creek banks, stone dams and building foundations.

From there the excursion moved north past Henderson's Spring, via the Daylesford Sewerage Treatment depot to Mt Franklin Crater Reserve. At the depot large numbers of Maned Duck, Black Duck, Lapwing and Australian Grebe were sighted. A Little Eagle, which appeared was driven off by a large group of Magpies.

Afternoon Tea and views of the picturesque landscape from the top of Mt. Franklin concluded the day's outing, prior to the journey home

G.B.

How To Help Threatened Birds....And Other Forms Of Flora And Fauna.

Dr. Stephen Garnett (at the recent Scientific Day of the R.A.O.U.) spoke on his work on threatened species of birds - No fewer than 22 species or subspecies of bird have gone extinct on Australian Territory in the last 200 years. For these we can do nothing. There are another 50 or so taxa that will go the same way unless action is taken soon.

Voluntary organizations can help in their conservation but the responsibility for these last ditch efforts is primarily that of Government.

Another 80 taxa however are either rare or insufficiently known. These birds are unlikely to have a high priority in Government conservation budgets. They currently include everything from the Night Parrot to the Pink Cockatoo. Some may be seriously threatened, others may be secure but it is up to the birdwatchers of Australia to determine the status of these birds and identify those that need greater effort. There are numerous examples of birdwatchers who have made vital contributions to the conservation of rare birds simply by being in the right place at the right time and taking adequate field notes and making them available for publication. This applies to other fauna
flora

G.B.

FAMILY JUNCACEAE- Rushes -

This family takes its name from "Juncus", the Latin name for a rush.

Only two genera occur in Vic. and one of these (Luzula) has only a few species (Or one). J. Willis in "Handbook to Plants in Victoria" describes 28 species in the genus Juncus. C. Beauglehole lists 15 spp. that occur in most of the Ballarat area.

Rushes usually grow in wet, cool places even where the water is salty. Toad Rush (J. bufonicus) is a weed in pasture in western Victoria.

Plants in this family (Monocotyledon!) usually have a perianth, which is greenish, calyx-like or scarious. Flowers occur in heads or in a branched compound inflorescence. They are usually bisexual. Plants may be annuals or perennials - the latter usually having strong, creeping rootstocks.

Genus Juncus - Rushes :- Leaves glabrous, cylindrical, channelled or flat, sometimes reduced to basal sheaths.
Capsule with numerous seeds.

Genus Luzula - Woodrush - :- Leaves hairy, flat.
Capsule with 1 cell containing 3 seeds.

h.h.